

Name of person interviewed: Henry Allerdts [HA]

Place interview took place: Fairfield Inn, Working Waterfront Festival

Date and time of interview: September 24, 2011

Interviewer: Mike Petillo [MP]

Transcriber: Laura Orleans

Abstract

Henry Allerdts recalls some of the worst weather he has been through, along with the various boats he has fished, Henry opines on regulations and the devastating effect they can have on the industry.

Demographic information

Sex: Male

Age: 69

Ethnicity: White

Occupation: Tugboat 2nd mate

Born: Brooklyn New York

Homeport: New Bedford

Key words

Role

Commercial fisherman (captain crew)

General Social and Cultural Characteristics

Social networks (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers)

Social and Cultural Characteristics of Fishing

Informal rules and regulations

Gear and Fishing Technology

Boats, ships, vessels

Business and Economics of Fishing and Other Maritime

Business and economic effects of regulation

Fisheries Management

Regulations

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MP We'll start recording and today is the 24th of September. It's twelve noon and we are interviewing Henry Allerd. Is that the right pronunciation?

HA Very good.

MP Ok excellent. And uh, my description of you says that you fished in New Bedford for a long time and you are currently a skipper on a tug boat.

HA Well second mate on a tugboat

MP Second mate

HA I have gone skipper on a tug

MP Ok

HA But this big company is you know is according to how long you've been there and I haven't been there that long so...

MP So uh, basic introductory information, biographical. If you just want to give us your name, tell us when and where you were born and just some of the information about your early years growing up and you know any sort of role models you had in or out of fishing or in the industry and any sort of family background you want to give to kind of set the stage for your life and career in the fishing industry.

HA Well I was born in Brooklyn New York 1943 and moved to Massachusetts, New Bedford area actually Fairhaven when I was probably seven, almost eight years old. And I went to school in Fairhaven, Fairhaven High School. And summers from the time I was fourteen until I got out of high school I went fishin' and did fish with my dad mostly up until he retired and then you know worked around the fleet learned a lot of different ways of doin' things from different people. What else is there? My father was a fisherman back during the depression. And I've been 'bout it basically I guess.

MP So when you said you would go out with him fishing, you guys would just go on a small boat together or would you

HA A small dragger, sixty five foot dragger. We would, in the summers there was usually me and him and one other crewman and we went fluke fishin' around Nantucket Sound and yellowtail fishing south of Martha's Vineyard and when I was in school a lot of times you know just for extra money we'd go out over a weekend just the two of us, wind up takin' you know takin' Monday off from school, 'cause we were takin' out fish. I had a few absent days because of that. Did what you had to do to make a livin' you know. It was back in the early 60s and it was hard makin' a livin'. That was back when

the mills were still goin' in New Bedford you know? And that was the only way to make a decent livin' was fishin'.

3:00

MP So you felt like one of the questions here is "was this your choice?" and that's kind of almost, we always have choices but do we really have choices, you know what I mean? When you say...

HA I liked it.

MP Yeah.

HA I liked going to sea.

MP Ok

HA You know? I couldn't picture myself doin' anything else and this was I guess in my blood. I tried doin' other things. I took a year off one time worked as an auto mechanic and it just didn't cut it. It wasn't, I just couldn't stand being away from the water. I had to be on the water. Even after I sold my fishin' boat in 1996, and went and got a, my license, my AB and didn't, went right back into the marine industry, right back into merchant marine. Wound up workin' for a gentleman over on Martha's Vineyard. Ran one of his tugboats for four years until I, well needed better benefits and got bored with it so I'm down working in New York on the tugs and barges.

MP So that's where you currently work, in New York?

HA Yes. Well we work in New York now the unit I'm on now, we go up and down the coast, Gulf of Mexico, and...we get around.

MP So in the early days when you kind of decided that you were gonna be a fisherman and work in the industry, what types of fishing were you doing?

HA Mostly flounder and haddock and codfish and...When I first started you had all the lightships and everything up and down the coast which was pretty neat. Had a lot of close calls. The old wooden boats, they leak like mad and came home with a couple of times on the handpump, you know, standin' on deck for ten, twelve hours crankin' on the hand pump, tryin' to make it back into, make it back in. And well I'm here so I guess we did a good job.

MP Maybe we'll come back to a little bit of close calls later. Can you tell us about the actual boats themselves? I mean what are we talkin' about here in terms of gear, size, you know the vessels themselves. Anything technical you want to talk about that you've worked on and your experiences in different kinds of actual, the boats themselves.

HA Oh yeah, the early boats were all eastern rigs, you know the pilot house aft, focsle forward and when you got into rough weather, you know you always had a lot of times, I've been through three, four hurricanes over the years. And you always have to have somebody in the pilot house and somebody else on, you know the crew would be down in the focsle forward and if you had to get across the deck you had to use to have to

6:00

HA string a cable across the deck so you had something to hang on to. It'd get pretty exciting at times, you know? It was three hurricanes one fall. I don't know a '75 foot wooden boat, the old Brush, that was a pretty wild time. Every trip I'd come in I'd have my bag packed I says I'm not goin' through another hurricane, then I'd get my paycheck and I'd put my bag back on the boat. So I did that three times in a row. I had to, we were out there to make a living and so, you know at that particular time, that was the best livin' I could have. Everybody else was makin' half what we were makin' so... It was a lot of money involved, you know, it was all about the money at the time.

MP You're talking about, all about, you deciding to stick with it and do the fishing

HA Stick with it because of the money, yup. It's kind of crazy to be out in hurricanes, but then you get your paycheck and oh that's not so bad. [laughs]

MP Tell me about the different positions that you've held and kind of working your way up and doin' certain kinds of work. Can you describe for us, just the different positions that you've had historically with boats and what jobs you've done and

HA Jobs, well as a kid I just you know was a deckhand with my father and he sold one boat, bought another one and he got sick so he had a hired captain three or four trips until he got better and I think I was like 21 years old and I didn't want to deal with the hired captain so at 21 I took his boat out for the first time, made three or four trips and then after that I figured out that you know I could do anything on the boat. I used to go engineer. 'Course I grew up on it and I could go engineer, take care of the machinery and go mate and I stayed away from cookin' cause once you got your reputation as being a cook on a boat, you couldn't leave that position. So I stayed away from being a cook. I'd go engineer and so I wound up being on all different boats you know when anybody needed anybody, I'd raise my hand and say I can do that. I can go mate, I can go engineer, I can deck, I can go captain. So I pretty much did any position that was available. And that helped me to get ahead in the industry. Till I bought my own boat.

MP So what's a typical trip like? You know maybe in the early days what was a typical trip like and maybe we can talk about now what's a, is there such thing as a typical trip? Or is it all different.

9:00

MP What's, can you talk us through the basics of what a normal, a day is like or going out on a trip?

HA Well I guess it's still the same way. You're in 72 hours. And that 72 hours you're home where I was usually the captain or owned the boat, I spent that time gettin' ready for the next trip, you know making the sure the machinery was good and overhauling, well not overhauling, but changing the oil and doing all the maintenance on the boat and the day we come to go out, and we usually left around eleven o'clock in the mornin' and one of the things that I did is I didn't allow any drinkin' on the boat and I had you know other captains tell me I'd never keep a crew, but I went zero tolerance. I wouldn't tolerate it so, I always had sober guys. And if they weren't sober, they didn't go with me. It was one of the things that I was a stickler about. So anyway we'd leave the dock and do a little gear work on the way out and I never, I usually had big mortgages on my boats, I never could really pay that much attention to weather so we went out in everything. [laughs] It was a hard northwest wind that was fair wind out and no matter how hard it blew, we left figuring by the time we go down to George's Bank it would, maybe die out. And it usually did. And if it didn't well then we fished anyway. And fished seven or eight days and on your way back again. And just did that over and over for years. Pretty much repetition.

MP How would you decide where to actually fish? Did you decide or

HA No I decided yeah. I kept logs of past years of where we'd been and different, you know I had logs of every boat I'd ever been on and where we had been at certain times of the year. At different times of the year fish will spawn and you wanna be in that area when they're gatherin' up in certain areas. They migrate and you had an idea where the migration routes were so you followed the migration routes of the fish and you know you paid attention to the market price and if the market price was down, you didn't go for that species. You'd go for somethin' else. Somethin' that had a better market value. Like any business, you know you try to get the most for your product. Like spring of the year when the flounders and everything, all the fish are spawning out the shoals and George's and I'd go down and go get fluke for the New York market. And they were always a better price. So you know you caught dollars not fish. It's always tryin' to calculate what would be the best way to go.

12:00

MP You talked about a zero tolerance for alcohol on your ship, was there any specific reason for that, did you have a bad experience at any time or

HA Oh sure, you always had bad experiences with alcohol. Guys not doin' their job. Years ago when I would run a boat for somebody and you'd just, you know you're just startin' up and you just took everybody you could off the dock and I had a guy go into the DT's and had to have him lifted off with a helicopter 'cause he was, I thought he was havin' an anyeruism. [laughs] He was floppin' around on deck like a flounder you know? Then he was out of it. So I said never, never again am I gonna put up with that stuff. You know, so that's it. You come down sober or you don't go. I always had one or two guys waitin' to take his place on the dock before I left so that was the way I did it.

MP Looking back at all your years fishin' and especially this area, in terms of the different crew members you've had, the other guys out on the boat with you, where were they mostly from? Were they all locals? Looking at it from an immigration standpoint, a demographic standpoint, where are those people from and has that changed over time? The people that you work with on the boat.

HA One of the fellows, when I first bought my, the old wooden boat I bought in 70, 1973, I hired a fellow and he was a, from Portugal and he wound up stayin' with me right up until the time I sold my boat, the last one. He was with me on three different boats. And he was with me the longest. He was with me over twenty years. And I most of the guys that I had with me stayed with me for seven, eight, nine years at a time until they, who knows, wanted a change. And it's pretty much a transient thing outside of that one fellow that stayed with me almost forever. But they come and go. You know? And local guys. I had a few Portuguese guys work for me, couple of Norwegians, but all walks. All walks of life or from different areas. It's pretty much homogenized now, you know. Down at the waterfront. The guy did the job, I hired him. It didn't matter what ethnic origin he had.

MP I'll ask this question then maybe this is kind of an open ended question, what makes a good fisherman?

15:00

HA Just like anywhere else, guy comes down on time, works to the best he can, works hard and sober and usually a good, a good family man makes a difference. Somebody that's made...the single guys you never know what's gonna happen [laughs], but a married man who needs the job and is willing to come down and work hard. That's what I always looked for. A guy that gets along with the crew. You can have your one fellow in the crew say your six men and you got one guy that's argumentative and everything, well you can't have him around for long no matter how hard he works because he's disruptive. So usually somebody that's, gets along with everybody else, works hard, comes down on time, sober, that's the guy I always got for years.

MP Do you have any children or family members in the industry currently? Or have you had any experience in the past with uh...

HA Yeah I have my two of my brothers boys, one fished with me for three or four trips, didn't like it, he's a, likes to go, he's a carpenter and he stayed at that. And the other nephew, worked as a mechanic for a guy over in Westport for awhile and then tried fishin' and fished for six months then came with me. He was with me for a couple years and then left my boat, went on other boats to gain more experience and now for the last I guess eleven, twelve years he's been captain of the Moreau. He does one of the, probably the best producer right now and he does very well. And my family, just my cousin Chris has been doin' excellent.

MP So why have you stuck with it all these years would you say? Just what you do?

HA It's all I know. It's all I know. I wouldn't, like I said, I tried being an auto mechanic, I was alright at it, but I didn't like the grease and the dirt and I had to deal with people. I had to deal with customers, you know. And I didn't like lyin' to 'em so I had to stay with fishin' where I could be honest and work hard. The harder I worked the better I was at it.

MP Do you have any opinion on the best years of the fishing industry, the golden years. Is there anything you can identify, and maybe most importantly, why were those good years?

HA Probably just before they implemented the 200 mile limit and after it for maybe five or six years and then they had the,

18:00

we had a big building boom in the late 70s where everybody built a new boat and then we had the government guaranteed loans and some guys were building more boats than they could afford. But there was a few fleets built and then they got overfished cause we had too many boats. The golden years probably up until the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties. And then it just went downhill after that. More and more regulations, too many boats, but that was the golden years for me, was the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties. That's when I, I did the best.

MP I think we definitely wanna talk on regulations and side of things, but what is the 200 mile limit, what is the deal with that. Can you explain that.

HA That started out when, I forget which, somebody, one of the countries started claiming that 200 miles from their coast is their economic zone so the United States said well we're gonna do the same thing. So they claimed out 200 miles was their economic zone. But unfortunately, or fortunately for Canada, Canada wanted half of George's Bank so they couldn't decide so it went to the Hauge in France and the World Court decided where to put the line. So we lost probably half our good fishing grounds to the Canadians. And I thought we shoulda shared them. 'Cause we had been sharin' it for years. Us and the Canadians were fishin' the same grounds for hundreds of years and then all of sudden we're made enemies. You know. Just by drawin' that line. So it was sad 'cause we got to know a lot of the Canadians. Used to talk to them on the radio off shore and now all of a sudden we're at odds with each other. And we lost a lot of good grounds. The Canadians lost a lot of good grounds on this side of the line. It was a sad thing that that was decided that way. It's uh, I guess wiser people than us, maybe, more, who knows. But it was, I thought it was a terrible thing when that happened. We lost a lot of good fishing grounds to the Canadians. And they lost a lot of good fishing grounds. They used to... we used to share with them.

MP So what other regulations have come into play and come on the books and how have they changed things for you and what is your opinion on them, on things maybe that have worked and other things that definitely haven't.

HA A lot of stuff has helped, I mean the larger mesh size lets a lot of juvenile fish live. It was a good thing.

21:00

Back in the 60s early 70s, we self imposed on ourselves how much like yellowtail flounder. I mean, how many we could bring in. We had a thing where we had like 5000 per man on the boat. So if you were seven men you'd bring in 35,000 pounds if you were six men 30 and so on, arithmetic. And it worked for awhile. And then people started cheating for some reason, well cheat, there was no law, it was just gentlemen's agreement, but not many gentlemen around. So that went and I don't know. It just got that crazy. The whole thing got crazy. It's...you know I'm used to when I started, I just went out and caught fish. And you just worked hard and now you had to be a bookkeeper and instead if you got in trouble you called the coast guard and now they're policemen so you hate, it's like gettin' pulled over in the side of the road every time you go up. You know you gotta go fishin' and you're gettin' stopped by the police. It's not a bad thing, safety inspections, we didn't mind that, we always had that. But this bein' looked at like a criminal, it gets to you after awhile. It's one of the reasons I got out. It was enough. Couldn't make a living anymore. I could make a, I make a better living now doing what I'm doing then when I was fishing and during the heyday I was making, you know I could make double what the guys in the merchant marine were makin'. I mean first house I bought, I bought with a year's wages. You can't do that anymore.

MP Do you have any sense on the regulator side of things and how that's impacted communities as a whole or different families. Have you, do you have any sense of the bigger picture of that?

HA Well as far as, everybody's just squeezin' by. I don't know of anybody that's saving any money. Some of the scallop boats have been doin' good. They got their stuff together and had a good lobby and worked things out very well. But the draggers are all outside of a couple of 'em are just barely squeakin' by. I know quite a few fellow that just gotten out they couldn't take it any more. It just, you know, they're starvin' and the price of everything gone through the roof and except your bottom line, your bottom line disappeared. Gotta go. I don't know how they're gonna make it from this point on. The fleets old. You go down and look around there all the boats are thirty years old or older. Nobody's built a new dragger,

24:00

I think there's been one new dragger built in the last ten years. And it doesn't compute to build a dragger today for what you can get out of it. You can't pay for it.

MP So when did you, when did you leave fishing and when did you move into your current...

HA 1990, December 20th, 1996 I sold my boat, I was trying to decide what to do so I made a trip on a friend of mine's boat the magestic, made three, four trips on that, squid fishin'. Then got into the fishermen relocation fund, I took advantage of that and went

and got my seaman's card and my merchant marine documents and my captain's license and tankerman endorsement and all that, made one more trip in December, Christmas trip, 'cause I was gettin' kind of broke by then [laughs] and then was offered a captain's job on a tug boat on Martha's Vineyard and did that for four years. But that's the last time I made a trip on a fishing boat was December of '97. Since then, merchant marine.

MP What was the fishermen's relocation program? What is that?

HA Guys that, well where they had so many boats had gone into the buyback program. I think they bought 27 or 28 boats that they bought back and if you figure five men average on those boats, six men average, something like that, that's what, a thousand guys. Isn't that right, no a hundred, probably a hundred thirty forty guys now are unemployed and no way to get a job. And the rest of the boats are cuttin' back on their crews where the scallop boats used to be anywhere's from nine to eleven men, they cut back to seven, so what are these guys gonna do, all they know how to do is fish. So they started up this thing where you got re-educated and to get into something else. Some guys went into truck driving, some went into, like I did, went in the merchant marine and different things. And one of my wife's nephews took a course in refrigeration and heating and got into that and, if you wanted to take care of, you know, the opportunity was there to get into something else, they took it. I took it. What else [laughs]

MP I'd like to go back to the some of the close calls if there's any stories you can share with us, especially with those hurricanes, that one year where there was three or four hurricanes in one season for you.

27:00

MP Anything you want to talk about that was just totally scary that you can really recall from those times when you're sayin' geeze in the moment, I don't care how much money I'm makin' this is not worth it.

HA Yeah, well actually the worst time, not worst time, but the worst weather I ever saw is at, they were callin' for a big northeaster and that wound up bein' the one that Perfect Storm thing that was, that just kind of hung out over George's and Grand Banks and we heard it was comin' so I says well I'm not leavin' I'm gonna wait till it's over. And it just hung there for like two days. What the heck is goin' on you know? Forty, fifty foot seas, breakin' all around us. I says oh, well, we took all the, we had a spare net on deck we took that put it down into the fish hold all the checkerboards and everything, put those down, chained down the hatch, closed up all the weather tight doors, this was a little seventy foot steel stern trawler I had and then we ran, usually what you do is you put your bow into the wind and just jog and go slowly into it. But when I'm goin' into it and the seas are breakin' they're higher than the mast, and took a couple of them right over the bow, green water right up over the wheelhouse window and I said well this isn't gonna work. So I tried to time it so you see a couple smaller seas, turned the boat around and ran fair wind, we ran fair wind for like three quarters of a day till we got off Block Island off of Rhode Island and then it wasn't so bad 'cause that storm, if you remember, it just hung out between George's Bank and the Grand Banks. So we hung out there for a day

and then said well, looks like it's dyin' out so we started, but it didn't 'cause it just hung there. And that was pretty bad. I had, I was the only one out there and I had the Coast Guard call us 'cause I guess some of the wives at home got nervous. And they, I had the Coast Guard call. What are they callin' me for? Are you guys alright? Sure we're fine. We're just ridin' it out. But it was pretty bad. It wasn't good. And everybody ran but me. [laughs] the smallest boat.

MP What year was that again?

HA Oh boy I don't even remember, that was, that was what in the mid-80s? That happened I think? Somewhere's in there. Don't remember now. Look up when the Perfect Storm was and that was when it was. That was bad. I guess Nantucket lost 20 yards of their land on the east side. Wasn't good, was a ship went up on the beach on Cape Cod.

30:00

I think the only, the other new boat I had was back in '77, so the blizzard of '78 I made, I didn't go through that one, but there was a couple other bad storms that I went through that winter, you know? Had a big mortgage, had to go. Always went. Hurricanes? Big seas. They don't last too long. It's not like a nor'easter. Nor'easter lasts two or three days. But a hurricane's usually gone in twelve hours. So it was scary for twelve hours and then it's over. Take, you know, take some green water on deck, but usually if you're prepared for it you take everything off the deck, put it below, tie everything down. I think we took the doors off of the engine room one time that we had to get some pen boards out and nail up the engine room doors. But if you're, I guess if you're lucky and payin' attention, it's not so bad. If you're unprepared then it's a lot worse. Scarier in the wintertime when you ice up. You got iced up good. We've been, that can be pretty bad. I know one boat I was mate on, we were, we were on the way home and we had a little bit of skim ice on it and we were right outside of Round Shoal Channel and we had about two, three inches of ice on everything so we all got out, chopped all the ice down and we're goin' down Nantucket Sound and the temperature dropped down to zero and by the time we come in, got in, we had three feet of ice on everything. And we were seven men. It was a boat called the Pauline H. It was about a 95 foot wooden boat. And we had the whole crew come out and then we had ten or eleven lumpers came on the boat, it took us four hours to clear the boat up enough to take out fish. It was, that was no fun, specially when it's zero out. Lately we haven't seen them hard winters like we did then. Anything else Mike?

MP Do you have any advice for guys for anybody wanting to get into the industry nowadays, the fishing industry?

HA Well I'd like to see more young guys at it. From what I understand I was told yes-a couple days ago that the average age now is 51 which is pretty sad. Nobody's breakin' in at it. It's a good livin' it's an honest livin'. It can be exciting at times that's for sure.

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It's tough to get into now. I guess if somebody wants to get into it, they go down to the docks and just keep asking and have somebody take 'em out. Give it a shot I guess, that

parts still the same. I broke in a lot of guys over the years they just wanted to go try it and so...but you know if they wanna try, like I say it's a good honest livin', get down there, get down the docks and start askin' around, try to get somebody to take you out, you're either gonna like it or you're gonna hate it. And that's all I can say about that.

MP What do you think the reasons are that younger people aren't as attracted to it anymore?

HA That's a good question. I don't know. Work's too hard. I mean that's the thing that I saw years ago too that some guys got out and they'd say you're crazy workin' like that I don't wanna do it and other guys who loved it. But I don't think the monetary rewards are as great as they were before. The scallop boats, they have the restriction on seven men, you can't, we used to take out what they called a "shacker" and you just paid 'em very little to come out and he was usually in addition to the regular crew and now that's not allowed 'cause you can't take more than seven men and if you take out somebody that's inexperienced, he can't cut out the scallops and he can't hold his own so nobody's breakin' anybody in 'cause you're not allowed to bring an extra person out. So it would be nice if we could do that again and have like a training program. But there are no training programs anymore. I don't know. I don't know what the answer is. Industry needs to work with the regulators to allow this, to allow people to break in. You know it's pretty sad when the average age is 51 years old. I was just talkin' to one of the women that was in, one of the directors of the or co-directors of the what do you call it, the

MP The festival?

HA The festival yeah. And they had trouble keeping insurance 'cause they had a fleetwide insurance program and they had to change carriers 'cause the carrier, everybody was so old it wasn't profitable any more. So they had to scramble look around for new insurers because of the age of guys. Yup, it's not like it used to be that's for sure.

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MP Do you see this event, this kind of festival as possibly exposing people and especially younger people to something they may not even be familiar with even in their own communities here?

HA I hope so. I hope, although it's so many people in it I can't see how you couldn't be exposed to it. 'Cause this is what supports this area is the fishin' industry. I think it helps maybe enlighten people from outside the industry to maybe loosen up on some of the restrictions that we have here so that we can get more viable and more energetic in what we do. 'Cause I know I lost my energy fifteen years ago.

MP One of the things personally you know when I come here as someone who didn't grow up in a fishing community or near a working waterfront, being able to come up and literally see it first hand, be on the docks, be on the piers, and see the people and see people acutally working and getting up on a stage or even a microphone and talking about it, I think it's a great way for me to all of sudden picture myself back in the 70s here

or something like that. So I think this festival is really great in that aspect because it's very educational it shows you first hand directly people from the community getting up and demonstrating and talking about the things. So I think it's a really, you know a pretty invaluable way to preserve the culture of it and kind of document and that's kind of what we're tryin' to do now with some of these interviews is to kind of preserve the people that have lived through certain times and this is how it was here. This is how it changed. So I think it's a great opportunity. Is there anything else that you feel like maybe you want to comment on or talk about given everything that you've done over the years and just especially in light of now, you know anything that has changed or been the same. Is there anything else that you'd want to add?

HA Well I mean this is what makes this area, this harbor, is the fishing industry. You know when I look around and you hear about they want to put a casino in here, well that's gonna take away, that's not gonna add anything. It's gonna take away from the waterfront. I mean this is an industry that supports the whole area and by, or like it's a harbor of refuge. And there's been things they wanna bring in and make marinas and make it a yacht harbor and that doesn't bring anything. It's, you know the trying to how can I say this,

39:00

HA bringing non-commercial things down to the waterfront, I mean it's nice to have a restaurant on the waterfront, but it doesn't do anything for the industry. It takes away from places to do repairs, places to, you know, you need the waterfront to promote the fishing industry, that's all we have here. There's nothing else left anymore. There's no more textile mills, there all gone. There's nothing. Industry had moved out. The only industry left is the fishing industry and you know bringing non-producing things to the waterfront is not a good thing. Even this hotel that we're sitting in is here right down on the working waterfront and it's not doing anything for it. It's more or less an attraction for tourists which I guess is good for the City in a sense. It's still right down, were here we're a hundred yards from the water. And it's not promoting the industry. What else can you think of Mike?

MP Well I am sure we could talk for a long time.

HA We can go on and on about his.

MP We still have some time, you know I'm

HA It's all opinions

MP Well I think we're trying to get, it's, we're trying to talk as we can get to kind of put aside their schedules. The more people we talk to and document, I think it's the more opinions we'll have and somewhere in there is, somewhere in there is the right way to do things.

HA Somewhere in there is the truth

MP Yeah possibly. But you know just thinking more about the regulatory side of things, have you had any experience in working with anybody who makes these regulations? Have you ever I don't wanna say have you ever lobbied yourself, have you ever had any interest or desire to go and work on some of these commissions 'cause they must seek the advice, they must have people sit on these boards and have actual fishermen there to testify saying well this is gonna help us and this is gonna hurt us. Right? Or am I totally, is that, do people

HA Oh yeah

MP Do these people make decisions in a vacuum?

HA It's true they do that. I haven't been on it personally, because when I was fishing, that's all I had time for.

MP Sure.

HA I was just too busy makin' a livin'. 19 what, before I bought my first boat, '73 I was on the research boat out of Wood's Hole. I worked for them for like five months. And these scientists would get these I don't know what do they call it, grants to do research and I'd go out there in that at that time I was what 27 years old

42:00

HA and I'd been fishing already for a long time. And I had a lot of questions for 'em. And I'd ask a lot of pointed questions as to what their research was accomplishing and what it was doing and then I'd get called up to the captain's [laughs] state room and told to keep my mouth shut. Not to ask these guys questions so, but I was interested in it. You know, what are you guys doing? And it was a lot of foolishness. So a lot of the...to me today and that's why I got a bad taste in my mouth for the NOAA research is because a lot of bad science. A lot of baloney that they came up with. It's like, you didn't see much good coming out of what they did. And there was a big flap here a few years ago where when they told, they had like a stern trawler rig and your cables have to be absolutely even for the nets to work and they were off 80-90 feet. So you weren't gonna catch anything and this is what they were basing their research on, they were basing it on that there wasn't any fish out there. Well there wasn't any fish out there 'cause the net was closed up. And you know stuff like that. I just saw, just being on that five months on there, I saw a lot of bad science. But, you know I didn't know anything 'cause I didn't have a Phd. That's the sad part you know. We give, fishermen gave as much input as they could but a lot of it was just disregarded and it's sad. And that's what a lot of your regulations are based on. One of the biggest problems I see right now is the grey seal population. It's in the tens of thousands. And they eat fish. Tremendous amounts of fish. Before they had all these derbies for sharks. Sharks ate a lot of grey seals and kept the population down. Up until I think it was 1950 or '51 Massachusetts had a bounty for grey seals. You brought in a nose you got five bucks. And that was discontinued back in the 50s so we've had about sixty years of the grey seal population going through the roof. At

a time when the fish stocks were down. I know was it about five years ago I worked for the guy on the Vineyard, we went into Nantucket and we're goin' down through the channel and I'm lookin' at the breakwater. I said who the hell raised the breakwater? I said wait a minute, let me get the binoculars out and I'm lookin' at the rocks and it was loaded with grey seals. So I'm estimating let's see that's about a hundred yards, that's so many and I know how long the breakwater was, and I says, that's between twenty five hundred and three thousand seals on the breakwater going up to Nantucket. And they all eat fish.

45:00

HA They're all fat. [laughs] So what to you do, but you can't put a bounty on 'em, because you'll have PETA and everybody else on you. Monomoy Island right now is loaded with 'em probably must be twenty, thirty thousand seals on Monomoy Island up the Cape. It's just an overpopulation that has no natural enemies and they eat fish. But that's nature I guess. It has nothing to do with economics. I was down to see my nephew on the Moreau here a couple months ago and got a couple haddock off him to take home for a meal and as I was filleting 'em up and just throwin' the heads over the side, the grey seals were eatin' the heads as fast as I could throw 'em over. So we got grey seals in the harbor and that, I have never seen those you know. Fifteen years ago there wasn't any in here. So there's all kinds of things to kind of messes up the ecology. Anything else Mike?

MP I think I'm good. I mean I'll definitely leave it up to you if there's anything else you think we should talk about.

HA Anything else on your agenda?

MP Well there's tons of questions I certainly didn't ask everything but I thought I was trying to have a good chat, I think I'm good. It was about a forty-five minute discussion so I think

HA Is it?

MP Yeah it went by quick. [laughs]

HA I could bullshit here all afternoon if you want.

MP Well if there was more time we could certainly do that. But I'm gonna stop it for now...

End of interview

46:56